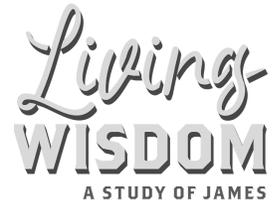


## WISE WORDS PART 2

October 19-20, 2022



1. Last week in James 3:1-12, we studied the power of our tongue which can be used for good or evil. What is one way you honored God with your words this week?

What is one thing you said this week you would like to take back?

Can you identify certain times or situations which lead you to use unwise words? Please share.

2. This week we will continue to study wise words contrasted with unwise words from the book of Proverbs. First, review James 3:13,17-18. List the descriptions James uses to define wisdom.

Which one of these descriptions would you like to incorporate more in your everyday speech and why?

3. Wise words are helpful to others. Next to each group of verses from Proverbs record the way wise words can be beneficial.

Proverbs 12:25; 15:23

Proverbs 12:18; 15:4,30; 16:24

Proverbs 15:2,7; 16:21,23; 25:12

Share a time you benefitted from someone's wise words.

After considering the above proverbs, what are some practical ways you can change your words to be more helpful to others?

4. The book of Proverbs contrasts the effects of wise words with the effects of unwise words. Write next to the following proverbs the descriptions of how foolish words hurt others.

Proverbs 10:11

Proverbs 11:9,12

Proverbs 12:6,18

Proverbs 15:4

Proverbs 26:28

What does God think of lying lips? Read Proverbs 6:16-19 and 12:22.

5. After reading the following verses in Proverbs 11:13, 16:28 and 26:20, write one sentence about the danger of gossiping or whispering about others.

What does Proverbs 26:22 say about gossip? Why do you think this is true?

In what ways will these verses change your behavior and speech concerning gossip?

6. Read Proverbs 12:16 and 17:14,19 along with Proverbs 15:1. What warnings and wisdom do you find in these proverbs that you can use in your everyday words with others?

Share a time you saw a gentle answer in action.

7. The timing of our words also matters. Describe in your own words what you learn about timely words from Proverbs 10:32, 15:23 and 25:11.

What does the book of Proverbs say about untimely words in 25:20 and 27:14?

8. The phrase *silence is golden* is something to consider. Read Proverbs 10:10,19; 13:3; 17:28 and write down some of the benefits in keeping silent.

From your own experience, think of some specific situations where a few words or even silence was the wise choice.

9. Our words can be spoken as well as written in letters, emails, texts, notes or Facebook. Which medium causes you the most difficulty concerning wise words and why?

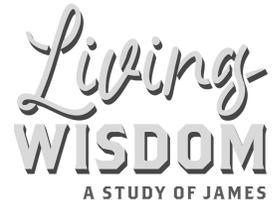
What action or attitude can you put in place to help increase your wise words? Consider Proverbs 15:28; 17:27; 21:23 and 29:20.

10. Our words matter, but we cannot have wise speech without God. Read Proverbs 2:6, 15:33 and 16:1,23. What practical measures can you take every day to keep your heart close to God?

11. Which proverb from this lesson was your favorite? Using your own words, write a proverb about an important truth you have learned from this lesson concerning wise speech.

12. Write out a personal prayer request in one or two sentences to share with your small group.

**JAMES 4:1-10**  
October 26-27, 2022



1. Read James 3:17-18 to review the ending of James chapter three. Now read James 4:1. What are the attributes of the wisdom that comes from above according to 3:17-18? What behavior results when heavenly wisdom is not pursued according to 4:1?

What brings about peace in James 3:17-18, and what brings about conflict in James 4:1?

Summarize what Jesus had to say about this subject. Read Mark 7:21-23.

2. Read James 4:1-10 and in your own words describe the community of faith James was addressing.
3. How would you define friendship with the world?

What temptations may lead us into this kind of friendship?

4. James describes friendship with the world in James 4:1-4. Make a list of his descriptions.

How does James finish this sentence? *Whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an \_\_\_\_\_.*

Read Romans 12:1-2. Why must Believers have a close friendship with God?

5. James 4:2-3 discusses asking God to meet our needs. Read these verses. How will the friend of the world spend whatever they hope to receive?

What are the sour fruits of selfish desires according to 4:2?

Psalm 37 teaches us that God meets the legitimate needs of those who trust in Him. What can we expect to receive when we are friends with God?

Psalm 37:3-4

Psalm 37:5-6

Psalm 37:10-11

Psalm 37:18-19

Psalm 37:23-24

Psalm 37:39-40

6. Read James 4:4-6. Why might James call the Jewish Christians adulterers here? Read God's words to the Jewish nation years earlier in Isaiah 54:5, Jeremiah 2:2 and Jeremiah 31:3b.

Think again about the dispersion of these Believers to pagan lands. What might be some of their flirtations with the world? What part would pride play in these flirtations?

Who is the person that receives grace from God according to James 4:4-6?

Share an illustration of God's grace manifesting itself in the life of a humble individual you have observed.

7. In James 4:7-10 we find the commands that lead us to friendship with God. List each action word that will bring this about.

James 4:7, 8 and 10 share some resulting rewards for our obedience. What are they?

8. Read James 4:7. We are commanded to submit to God but resist the devil. How can we resist the devil according to 1 Peter 5:8-9?

9. What commands does James give us in order to draw near to God in James 4:8?

How do we fulfill these commands? Read Psalm 139:23-24 and 1 John 1:9-10.

10. Recognizing our tremendous need for cleansing is not to be taken lightly. What does James tell us to do in 4:9?

Explain what these actions would accomplish as you draw near to God.

11. Read James 4:10 and explain these realities of the friend of God:

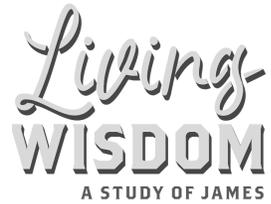
*The way up is down.*

*The lowly one becomes the lifted one.*

12. Write out a personal prayer request in one or two sentences to share with your small group.

## **JAMES 4:11-17**

*November 2-3, 2022*



1. Begin by reading James 4:11-12 along with James 4:1. According to verse 11, what was one cause of quarrels among the early Christians?

The Bible uses the word slander to describe speaking evil of others. What other words come to mind when you hear the word slander?

Although the world has a casual attitude toward slander, it is often very destructive. What do the following verses in Proverbs say about slander?

Proverbs 11:9

Proverbs 17:9

Proverbs 26:22

2. Reread James 4:11-12, but this time read it along with James 4:10. Explain how humbling ourselves before God helps us to guard against speaking evil of others.

What are some ways we rationalize our slander of others?

3. James 4:11 also warns against judging fellow Christians. We are called to encourage fellow Christians to repent and be restored to wholeness. What must we do to prepare ourselves before we help a fellow Christian struggling with sin? Look at Matthew 7:1-5 for insight.

Read Galatians 6:1 and record some ways you can encourage a fellow Christian who is struggling with sin.

4. Continue by reading James 4:13-16. What evidence recorded by James indicates the early Christians were more confident in their own plans than they were in God's plans for them?

There is no evidence they sought the will of God when making their plans. What do the following portions of scripture say about including God in our planning?

Proverbs 16:3

Proverbs 16:9

Proverbs 19:21

5. According to James 4:14 and 16, what factors were foolishly being ignored as they made their plans for the future?

Read James 4:15. What godly attitudes would you need to reflect a life lived with regard to God's will?

6. What has God provided to help us discern His will? Look at Hebrews 4:12 and John 14:26 for insight.

How do you go about determining God's will for your life?

When is it most difficult for you to discern God's will?

What are some reasons you do not seek or follow God's will?

7. Explain how your desire to live in God's will demonstrates your faith in His sovereignty. What is the ultimate outcome of a life lived within the will of God? Look at Matthew 5:16 and 1 Corinthians 10:31 for insight.

8. Finish by reading James 4:17. Summarize verse 17 in five words or less.

Why do you think James would conclude this portion of scripture with this stern warning?

9. Glance back over James 4:11-17. Which is more difficult for you, trusting God's will in His judgment or trusting God's will with your future? Why?

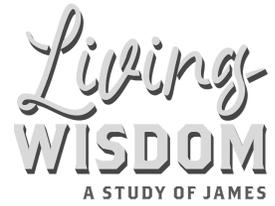
What verse or verses from this portion of scripture have helped you evaluate your desire to obey God's will in these two areas of your life?

Consider your present circumstances and write a short prayer asking God to help you discern and obey His will.

10. Write out a personal prayer request in one or two sentences to share with your small group.

## **JAMES 5:1-12**

*November 9-10, 2022*



1. Although financial abundance can make life easier in many ways, write down some temptations that can come into our lives as a result of wealth.

2. Read James 5:1-3. How does James confront his wealthy readers in vs. 1?

What words come to mind when you think of someone weeping and howling?

How does the phrase “riches to rags” describe the future of the rich?

Read Matthew 6:19-21. In light of Jesus’ words, how have the wealthy in James 5:1-3 missed the mark?

3. Read James 5:4-5. List the offenses of the wealthy described in these verses.

Read the following verses. Record what these Jewish converts to Christianity would have known.

Leviticus 19:13

Deuteronomy 24:15

Malachi 3:5

4. What words and phrases describe how the wealthy class have lived according to James 5:5?

How does this description challenge you to be more aware of self-indulgence and excess in your life today?

What are some changes you can consider to avoid the temptation of self-indulgence and excess?

5. Read James 5:6. As the behavior of the rich and wealthy progresses from hoarding to withholding wages to self-indulgence, what is the ultimate action of those who will do anything to guard their wealth and sustain their lifestyle?

What evidence do you see of people oppressing others to guard their own wealth and lifestyle in our world today?

6. Read James 5:7-9. Define patience in your own words.

What event does James have in mind as he exhorts patience?

According to James, how is a farmer an example of patience?

7. Does remembering the blessing of Christ's future return motivate you to patiently endure hard people and hard circumstances in life today? Why or why not?

8. What warning does James give to believers as they wait for Christ's return in vs. 9?

Read James 4:11-12 and explain why judging others is a bad choice.

James gives a picture of Jesus waiting at the door of heaven for each of us. How does that picture motivate you to live a life that honors Him today?

9. List everyone who is our example of patience and suffering according to James 5:10-12.

What character traits does James ascribe to Job and the prophets? To the Lord?

Read Job 42:12-13. How is God's mercy and compassion evident at the end of Job's suffering?

10. What instructions are given to Believers in James 5:12?

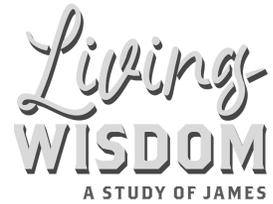
Write down words that describe the person whose "yes" means yes and "no" means no.

How can our words reveal our impatience and stress during times of hardship and suffering?

11. Write out a personal prayer request in one or two sentences to share with your small group.

## **JAMES 5:13-20**

*November 16-17, 2022*



1. Prayer is talking and listening to God. How has prayer been important in your life?

2. Read James 5:13. What is prescribed for those who are suffering?

Read Psalm 13 as an example of prayer during a trial. Describe how the Psalmist feels and what he knows to be true about God's character.

How has prayer been beneficial during seasons of suffering in your life?

How can prayer be difficult during seasons of suffering, and how can we overcome those challenges?

Suffering is a theme in James. What wisdom have you learned about suffering from James 1:2-6 and 5:7-11?

3. Read James 5:13 again. What is advised for those who are cheerful?

Read Psalm 100 as an example of praise. Describe how the Psalmist feels and what he knows to be true of God's character.

Why do you think it is important to praise God when we are cheerful?

4. Read James 5:14-15. Describe the people in these verses and what each person does.

The sick person:

The elders:

The Lord:

5. Read James 5:16. What are Believers commanded to do?

How has sharing your sins and temptations with other Christians, and praying for each other, brought relief and wholeness to your life?

6. Read James 5:16b-18. Read also 1 Kings 16:29-31, 1 Kings 17:1-7 and 1 Kings 18:1-2, 41-45. God brought judgment on the nation of Israel due to their idolatry. Describe what you learn about that situation and Elijah's role.

How does James describe Elijah in James 5:17 and what do you think that means?

Elijah's prayers are powerful because he is praying to a powerful God! How does Elijah's example encourage, convict, or motivate you?

7. Read James 5:19-20. Describe the two people mentioned in these verses.

What is the result of the faithful Believer's action?

How has your walk with the Lord benefited from others who lovingly offered you constructive criticism or rebuke?

Why do we sometimes shy away from offering or receiving loving rebuke?

8. James 5:14-20 involves being in community with other Christians. Can you share a time when God has used another Believer's actions or prayers to influence your life?

Is God calling you to influence or pray for other Believers this week? What steps do you need to take to obey His direction?

9. Reread James 5:13-20. List all the circumstances in which prayer is mentioned.

How would you like to grow in your personal prayer life?

How would you like to grow in your prayers for other people?

10. What is a meaningful verse or piece of living wisdom that you have learned through our study of James?

11. The goal of our study of James was for us to live out our faith skillfully as we call on God for wisdom. How have you grown this semester in your commitment to call on God for wisdom?

How have you been challenged by James to live out your faith wisely?

12. Write out a personal prayer request in one or two sentences to share with your small group.